

FREE!**SATURDAY morning**

ANIME EXPOSURES

The Official ANIME EXPO 2000 Newsletter

- Yu Watase Panel 10:00a
- Ikuhara/Saito signing 10:00a
- Yu Watase signing Noon
- Yasuhiro Nightow 1:00p

Issue 3**Because Animated Minds Want To Know****July 1, 2000**

ANIME + AMERICAN

ANIMATION = ???

Coexistence of Programs on American Television Addressed at WB Panel



Above: A picture of the title character from 'Card Captor Sakura,' now being aired on Kids WB as 'Cardcaptors.'

Day 1 of AX 2000 saw the convergence of anime industry pros and American media giants in discussion about the current and future state of anime both in the U.S. and Japan. This is most apparent at the Warner Bros. & Studio GONZO panel, hosted by SPJA President Mike Tatsugawa. Representing the American side was Ken Duer, Vice President of Warner Bros. Worldwide Productions, while Showji Murahama, producer at Studio GONZO, spoke as an insider of the anime industry. The following are a few key issues addressed by the panel:

As anime gets more airplay here at the States, and more titles get licensed for U.S. distribution, will the anime industry begin to produce new titles with the American market in

mind? Mr. Murahama maintains that current anime still focuses very specifically on the Japanese audience, but "maybe it's time to think more globally." The Japanese recession has dried up many funds going to the animation studios, forcing producers to seek additional capital from Europe, Southeast Asia, and finally North America markets, whether it be through licensing fees or actual production sponsorship. **While anime geared towards children are getting more exposure during the day, thanks to Pokemon (which was repeated ad nauseam during this particular panel), perhaps more sophisticated anime will be shown during primetime?** Mr. Duer was quick to provide a pessimistic response, blaming the very strict

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

- The Escaflowne movie (subtitled in English) will be shown in place of all the previously scheduled 'X' movie showings in the Film room.

- Vandread Panel in Live Programming 2 from 2:00pm, Saturday. See a world premiere showing of its pilot film! Also view a message video from Japan, introducing the series director Takeshi Mori and voice actress Yumi Kakazu!

- The Mouse Strikes Back -We have



been informed that Disneyland park will **not** admit people who are in costume. Please dress accordingly if you are visiting the park.

- The Exhibit Hall (aka Dealer's Room) will open at Noon today, later than previously scheduled.

U. S. broadcast standards to be the biggest obstacle. "The Simpsons is a rarity," and primetime animations are very expensive to produce. "If you flop with primetime, that's millions of dollars down the drain." According to Mr. Murahama, anime doesn't even get much primetime exposure in Japan. Few titles are shown at the golden hours, and most are "very family-oriented," such as Detective Boy Conan. All the edgier stuff are "shown either late night or on satellite channels." Taking a cue from the Japanese, perhaps primetime broadcast of anime on American cable and premium channels will be possible in the near future. The future may hold even more possibilities. "The current rule-makers grew up with Disney and Hanna Babera cartoons," Mr. Duer explained. "They are making the broadcast decisions. They are the parents concerned about content. But there is a new generation who is growing up

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AX Exhibit Hall

Better Than Ever

Exhibit Hall, aka Dealer's Room



When attendees walk into the AX 2000 Exhibit Hall, they are greeted with booths that stretch out as far as the eye can see. People have so many choices that many can't help but wander about, looking at all the merchandise ranging from CDs and DVDs to resin kits and keychains.

With a record-breaking number of booths/exhibitors, AX is without a doubt, the largest anime convention in the United States. Seventy-one exhibitors are displaying items in just under two hundred booths, making the Exhibit Hall a veritable indoor mall. Some distributors are new this year, but many are returning merchants. Anyone willing to walk around will surely find a good deal. And from the many bags people have been seen carrying away from the Exhibit Hall, everyone seemed satisfied.

But what did the distributors think? Three vendors offer their insight.

Dan Bogle of Anime Plus (www.animeplus.com) offers his two cents. Anime Plus offers a wide variety of items, in particular CDs, DVDs, and resin kits. This is his personal first time, but the store's fourth year. Compared to other conventions, the first day of AX went well. The most popular items are the Cowboy Bebop and Escaflowne CDs and DVDs. The most expensive items sold are the \$120 resin kits. While he believes that the first day went well, he



does have some suggestions for next year's AX. The location provided problems for dealers, because shuttling back and forth created parking hassles. It would be a good idea to provide parking permits.

Kanae Yamada of Himeya Soft, Inc. USA (www.himeya.com) has been at the AX for three years. The store offers a wide selection of videos and import games. His biggest and most popular sales have been the Japanese games; some sold at \$80. As a native of Tokyo, he travels to AX for exposure to an American audience. When he compares AX 2000 to Japan's convention, he can't help but find it small for his taste. Not to worry Mr. Yamada, we'll get there soon! His only gripe so far for the convention is the ugly partitions used to separate one dealer from another.

Annie Chang is new to AX, but Anime Depot is not (www.animedepot.com). Anime Depot provides oodles of tapes and DVDs. Although there is not one particular series that is the most popular, she does note that Science Fiction is a huge hit. Some examples are Evangelion, Cowboy Bebop, and Outlaw Star. Perfect Blue and Blue Submarine No. 6 DVDs are also being purchased. The most expensive item sold so far is the Fushigi Yugi DVD Boxset for just under \$200. Overall, she believes that AX is professionally run and a lot better than hotel directed conventions. AX is

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with Japanese video games, Pokemon, Sailor Moon, etc. When they become the rule-makers, things will hopefully change."

Finally, with the advent of Cardcaptors (aka Card Captor Sakura) on the WB, will U.S. TV see an increase of anime geared towards girls, possibly with romantic overtones? Well, according to Mr. Duer, there were more boys watching the first two Saturday morning showings of Cardcaptors than girls (based on preliminary demographic numbers). This was also true with the audience of Sailor Moon. Contrarily, "in Japan, more girls watched the shows," Mr. Murahama quipped, "but more guys buy the videos." However, American animation may have taken the cue with the girl power theme. "Powerpuff Girls is a good example of something heavily influenced by anime," Mr. Duer said, "but remains thoroughly American at the same time." Warner Bros. itself will be producing an upcoming series titled the Girls of Gotham, which will feature the female cast of the Batman Saga for a change. Maybe all this interaction - the so called bridge - between eastern and western animation is on the fast track to change both styles into something completely new. Only time will tell.

- Wing Fox

a great opportunity for anime to break into the mainstream, and a great way to sell products.

While most dealers will be around for the full four day convention, some unfortunately won't be able to stay as long. Anime Artwork and TOMY Yujin Corporation will only be attending Friday and Saturday. Planet Neo will only be attending Sunday and Monday. APC/Animaxis.com (Dream Network), JUNGLE Special Collectors Shop and S.E. Inc. (AKA "Deleter") have come overseas from Japan. Anime Link is selling items related to Akemi Takada's special exhibit.

- Jing Tung

GUESTS OF HONOR

Spotlights for the day



Above: A fan of Watase Yuu's presented her a mask of the face she usually uses in her occasional self-inclusion manqa during Friday evening's Meet the Guests Reception.



Yasuhiro Nightow

Trigun (picture of main character shown above) is one hot anime title. Pioneer Entertainment is lucky to be releasing it. And we all have Mr. Nightow to thank, because he was the one who created Vash the Stampede, one of the most indelible gunslinger characters born out of Japan. All fans should make sure to attend his panel on Saturday at 1:00 PM (Live Program 1) and autograph session (if you can get in) on the same day at 6:00 PM.

Yu Watase

The very popular creator of megahit series Fushigi Yugi returns to AX to promote her new series Ayashi no Ceres. She will also be on hand to greet her increasing American fanbase, due in large part to the video release of FY by Pioneer Entertainment. In the meantime, Ayashi no Ceres has already finished its manga run. Its long-awaited anime adaptation currently airs weekly on the Japanese satellite channel WOWOW. It will no doubt generate many more fans of Watase's work following its imminent American release. Find out all about it at her panel on Saturday at 10:00 AM (Live Program 1).

Ikuhara, Saito, and the Intricacies of Utena

Mr. Ikuhara started this panel by recalling his position in 1986 as the TOEI Assistant Director. But it was not until 1992 when Ikuhara claims that "Sailor Moon changed [his] career." After Sailor Moon he did not want to work on any animation that used a girl as the leading character. He continued "But...I fell in love with Utena." Mr. Ikuhara was then asked, "What type of girls do you like?" This is a question well deserving for the artist whom had earlier made a point to announce yesterday that he is single...His reply using some broken English was something like: "Sore-wa nice bust!" (He actually may have meant to say "girls with nice butts" but it was hard to decipher his English words...).

Chiho Saito began her part of this panel by going back when she was a simple manga artist. One of the fans in the audience then asked Saito about Chu-Chu, to which she rapidly replied "Not my fault!"

Together Saito and Ikuhara replied to several questions. One particular question pertained to why they made many changes in the Utena movie. Saito commented to this that only the looks were adjusted, but not the character personalities. Ikuhara had wanted to change the looks to something more picturesque, which his experience in color enabled him to execute. It seems that the two artists enjoy working together to create anime that their fans also enjoy.

- Wing Fox and Robert Lobbia



Ikuhara and Saito at panel

EXPOSED!

Which anime character should people stop dressing up as?



"He's a cool character and all, but there are too many Xellos's."

Emi Yonemura
Sacramento, CA



"Ranma males. Every single one is exactly the same."

Stephen Wong
(left)
San Leandro, CA

"Sailor Moon. It's been done well, and it's been done many many times."

Kelly Chemini
(right)
Batavia, NY

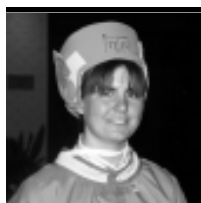
"Utena, because they hardly do the hair right."

Allie Auld
(center)
Tiburon, CA



"The really skimpily outfits and the 50 year-old guys in Sailor Moon outfits."

Shana Brosh
Wasilla, AK



"The Starlights, 'cause I've seen too many scary ones."

Novim Spencer
Santa Clara, CA



'Oooo, shiny!' Discotheque Anime Fever



AX attendees dance en masse

AX Stats

Here are the numbers you've all been waiting for!

Day 0 - Thursday

At-Con Reg 617
PreReg 1495
2112

Day 1 - Friday

At-Con Reg 1703
PreReg 1367
3070

Total for Days 0 and 1: 5182

Video Room Schedule Experiences Numerous Changes

Please take note of the following additional Video Room programming changes for today:

Video Room 1:

- 9:15a - Ninja Cadets
- 10:40a - Neon Genesis Evangelion
- 4:45p - Gundam Wing
- 7:10p - Neon Genesis Evangelion
- 9:00p - City Hunter
- 10:30p - [Programming Ends]

Video Room 3:

- 10:15a - Patlabor OAV
- 11:05a - Record of Lodoss War

Video Room 4:

- 9:10a - Cat Girl Nuku-Nuku
- 5:10p - Irresponsible Captain Tylor
- 6:10p - Patlabor (TV)
- 6:40p - Sorcerer Hunters
- 7:10p - Fire Emblem
- 8:10p - Giant Robo vol.2
- 10:10p - [Programming Ends]

Video Room 5:

- 6:10p - The Vision of Escaflowne
- 6:40p - Cityhunter 357 Magnum

SATURDAY LIVE PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE!

SATURDAY Live Program 1 (Grand Ballroom)

10:00 AM Yu Watase
11:00 AM Blue Sub (11:30)
Noon Blue Sub
1:00 PM Yasuhiro Nightow
2:00 PM Yasuhiro Nightow
3:00 PM (Room
4:00 PM closes for
5:00 PM Masquerade
6:00 PM setup)

Live Program 2 (Coronado)

Pioneer
ADV Films
LoGH with Kikukawa
LoGH with Kikukawa
Vandred / Gatekeepers
Gatekeepers
Import Games
Bandai Entertainment
Fan/Misc

Live Program 3 (Avalon)

Hana Yori Dango
Media Blasters
Viz Communications
New Generation
Game Show #2
Game Show #3
Digital Manga
Voice Acting
Macross

Gaming (Mediterranean)

Signups begin
I'm the Chef
I'm the Chef
I'm the Chef
Open Gaming
Lord of Lunar
Lord of Lunar
Lord of Lunar
Lord of Lunar